

Alna Meeting House
Alna, Maine
LINCOLN Co.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

District of Maine

Historic American Buildings Survey
Josiah T. Tubby, District Officer
537 Congress Street, Portland, Maine

"ALNA MEETING HOUSE"

Alna, Lincoln County, Maine

Owners

Town of Alna

Date of Erection

1789

Builders

(Ref. Bronze Tablet at Entrance) "Erected 1789 by people of New Milford now Alna".

Present Condition

The meeting house is in practically the same condition as at time of erection. In 1889, the building underwent extensive repairs. It was originally built without a chimney but later a chimney was added so that the building could be heated.

Number of Stories

Two

Materials of Construction

Foundation of stone. Floors pine. Exterior walls clapboarded. Roof shingled. Interior walls plastered, with heavy timbers exposed. Panelling on balcony rail, pulpit and pews is grained. Other wood work painted gray. Exterior of the meeting house is painted a light buff, with brown blinds and white trim.

Other Existing Records

Program of "Centennial of Old Alna Meeting House" by Rufus King Sewall published 1889 (in custody of Maine Historical Library, Portland). Photograph of exterior of Meeting House in Henry E. Dunnack's "The Maine Book" page 192, with the following notation beneath picture, "Meeting House at Alna", Said to be the finest existing specimen of the earliest form of New England meeting house. Also on page 197 of The Maine Book is a photograph of the pulpit.

The pews of the meeting house average five feet square with seats on three sides. Some of the seats are hinged. In an old book, reference was made to the noise "as the rattle of musketry when the singing was over and the hinged seats were dropped."

The pulpit is elaborately moulded. It is reached by a steep flight of stairs from the main floor. The pulpit desk is about ten feet above the main floor. There are movable steps inside the pulpit aggregating eighteen inches above the floor which were probably placed there so that a preacher of small stature could stand at a proper height while conducting services.

The deacons' and elders sat immediately beneath the pulpit and faced the congregation.

There is a gallery around three sides of the building. In the central rear section of the gallery is one large pew which is mentioned in the "Centennial of Old Alna Meeting House" as the "singing gallery".

The gallery posts are so moulded that the narrowest section comes at the level of the eyes of the congregation thereby giving the best possible view of the preacher.

The town in which the meeting house is located is called Alna, but the church was built in "the municipality of New Milford" in the precinct of Pownalboro, district of Maine. (Ref. Sewall). Name New Milford changed to Alna in 1811.

The Alna Meeting House was originally a Puritan Church. Rufus King Sewall describes the architecture of the church as follows: "an outgrowth of Massachusetts church architecture, as well as the form suited to social and public worship of God".

The church is used for one religious service each year, for town meetings, and as a voting place. It is kept in good repair.

Chas. J. Jannell

Approved

James F. J. Jannell

Date: July 27, 1936

Rev. Oct. 20, '36 H.W.